

MINUTES
WILLIAMSTOWN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
October 14, 2008
7:00 P.M.

Present: Jane B. Allen, Chairman, Tom Costley, David A. Rempell, Richard C. Steege, and Ronald Turbin

Others Present: Jon & Tracy Baker, Donald Dubendorf, Ronald Gagnon, Juliana Haubrich, Pat McLeod, Michael Steele, Kelly N, Annette Jenks, Beth Goodman, Peter Fohlin, Kathy Poirot

- 1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING STATEMENT:** Ms. Allen read a statement explaining Question 1 on the November election ballot and what it would mean for Williamstown. She said that Williamstown receives \$3.2 million in state aid. If the revenues are cut due to the elimination of the income tax, the state might have to cut revenues to towns by as much as 70 percent. She added that it's very worrisome considering that the same measure received 45 percent of the vote several years ago when it was on the ballot at a time that was not as financially stressful as it is now.
- 2. SELECTMEN MINUTES:** September 22, 2008 – Mr. Rempell moved to approve the September 22, 2008 minutes with one correction. Mr. Steege seconded and the motion carried unanimously.
- 3. PETITIONER'S REQUEST:** None
- 4. PUBLIC HEARING:**

A. 7:05 p.m. Public Hearing for a transfer of an All Alcoholic Beverage Package Store License, located at 280 Cole Avenue from Ronald Gagnon, d/b/a The Spirit Shop of Williamstown to Tracy E. Baker, d/b/a The Spirit Shop Inc.

Ms. Allen opened the public hearing at 7:05. Ms. Baker stated that she and her husband Jonathan had ties to the community, she being a Williams College graduate and Jonathan a native of Lanesborough who graduated from Mt. Greylock Regional High School. Mr. Baker works in the liquor wholesale field and Ms. Baker has many years of experience working in a bar. Both the Bakers are TIPS trained. They plan to keep the package store and Deli Station running as is and possibly make improvements in the future. Ms. Allen closed the public hearing.

Mr. Rempell moved to approve the transfer of an All Alcoholic Beverage Package Store License, located at 280 Cole Avenue from Ronald Gagnon, d/b/a The Spirit Shop of Williamstown to Tracy E. Baker, d/b/a The Spirit Shop Inc. Mr. Turbin seconded and the motion carried. Selectmen thanked Mr. Gagnon for doing a terrific job over the past 28 years and wished the Bakers smooth sailing while staying in sync with the state and police department.

5. ITEMS FOR SELECTMEN'S CONSIDERATION:

A. "Haunted Eastlawn Cemetery" Juliana Haubrich, event coordinator, along with Library Director Patricia McLeod and their creative team in the audience, gave an

update to answer any questions the Board may have since the last report in August. Ms. Haubrich said the event has been in the planning stages for over a year with grants from the Northern Berkshire Cultural Council, Fund for Williamstown and generous support from the Friends of the Milne Library and the Library Trustees. She said the event will be staffed by House of Local History board members, Library staff and the town police department. The main part of the event will take place on the grassy lawn next to and around the Sherman Burbank Chapel with free shows, arts and crafts from Rural Lands and snacks from Wild Oats Market. The rest of the cemetery will be secured with road blocks and the older graveyard, where tours will take place, will be roped off to the public with the help of Williams College Buildings and Grounds. David Loomis, Deb Burns and Tom McHugh will guide groups of five through the oldest part of the cemetery. The tour will stay on the old road and will not go near any graves. Reenactments will take place in areas where no one is buried with actors having deep respect for the people they portray and the stories they will tell. The content of the tour will be based on local legends and actual events in the town's history. The research came from the House of Local History with the help of Annette Jenks. Ms. Haubrich said their hope is to make the tour an engaging way for residents to learn about local history and hear the stories of struggle and sacrifice made by people buried at Eastlawn. The event will take place on October 31 and November 1.

Mr. Michael Steele came before the selectmen and said that he felt although the general feeling about this event is a great thing, he felt it didn't belong in a cemetery and felt it disrespectful. He said that after speaking with several community members who had relatives buried in the cemetery, and clergy members, that he was surprised no one else voiced their concerns. Mr. Steele said he appreciated the work and creativity put into this event and was not asking for the event to be cancelled. Mr. Steege agreed with Mr. Steele. Mr. Costley said that this event is geared toward children and they don't need to think a cemetery is haunted. Ms. Haubrich said the event has some spooky qualities because of the holiday, but it also will focus on local historical stories. Ms. Allen said the Board thought from the beginning that the event organizers intent was not to disrespect and desecrate the cemetery and we applaud the work you have done and the accommodations you've made.

B. Church Corners LLC Zoning Comprehensive Special Permit Filing Fee Waiver (B. Goodman) – Ms. Goodman, Attorney for the Church Corners group requested that selectmen waive the \$90 ZBA Comprehensive Special Permit filing fee needed for the commercial renovation of eight affordable housing units at the former St. Raphael's Church. Ms. Goodman explained that the attorney fees, architect services, and others involved have donated their time for the project and ask that the town show support by waiving the fee. The group has secured funds from the Community Preservation Act and the Fund for Williamstown but will need to reapply for more CPA funds next year. They don't have a construction budget for the project yet. Mr. Rempell moved to approve the waiver of the \$90 ZBA Comprehensive Special Permit fee. Mr. Steege seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Recognition of Susan Mead – Susan Mead is being honored on October 22nd by the Northern Berkshire Business and Professional Women who have asked that the Town present a certificate in recognition of this achievement. Ms. Allen read a proclamation aloud to be presented by the Town. Mr. Rempell moved that the selectmen sign the certificate. Mr. Costley seconded and the motion carried

unanimously. Ms. Allen will deliver the certificate to NBBPW Chairman Elizabeth Manns.

D. Cal Ripken Lease Agreement – Although selectmen signed the lease agreement in August of this year, Williams College asked that clause 6.3 be removed because they don't sign Waivers of Subrogation. The lease agreement has been reprinted without clause 6.3 and the new document is now presented to selectmen for signature. Mr. Costley moved that the selectmen sign the lease agreement. Mr. Steege seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Local Auction Permit for 10/23/08 – former Taconic Restaurant – Mr. Turbin moved to approve the local auction permit for the former Taconic Restaurant on October 23, 2008. Mr. Rempell seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

F. November 4, 2008 Presidential Election Warrant – Mr. Costley moved to sign the November 4, 2008 Presidential Election Warrant. Mr. Steege seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

G. Water & Sewer Warrant – Mr. Rempell moved to sign the water and sewer warrant in the amount of \$265,603.79. Mr. Turbin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

6. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: See attached report

7. OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Rempell said he appreciated Ms. Allen's opening statement and is concerned that the last time this question was on the ballot, 45% of voters said yes to no Massachusetts state tax. He made a motion to express the Board's feelings that Question 1 should not pass. Mr. Steege seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Turbin said he will attend the Northern Berkshire sub-regional caucus of the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization on October 16 and will lobby for the delegate or alternate seat. He also announced the MMA annual meeting will be in January and he is excited about the upcoming speakers and programs.

Ms. Allen announced October is Mental Health Awareness Month and read a list of a series of discussions to be held at Williams College at Paresky: October 16- on Personality Disorders and October 21 - on Depression

8. ADJOURN: Mr. Costley moved to adjourn at 8:26 pm. Mr. Steege seconded and the motion carried unanimously. The next Selectmen Meeting is Monday, October 27, 2008 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Turbin, Secretary

RT/kp